BIOS

Alberta Society of Professional Biologists • Spring 2011

Volume 26 • Number 1

ASPB 2011 Conference and Annual General Meeting

The Role of the Biologist in Industrial Development

April 13 and 14, 2011

ASPB 2011 Conference
to be held at
Calgary Zoo, Safari Lodge,
Calgary, Alberta

For more information and to view the Draft Program visit our website at www.aspb.ca

Submit your photos to ASPB and win a prize!

Details on Page 2

ASPB 2011 Annual General Meeting

April 13 from 4-6 pm
in the Safari Lodge, Calgary Zoo

Online Registration Now Available
www.aspb.ca

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BIOS is published for the enjoyment and benefit of the members of the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists and those interested in the field of professional biology. Articles or comments are welcomed and should be sent to the editor, Linda Zimmerling at lindazim@shaw.ca.

ASPB Photo and Specimen Submission Request

Contribute Photos and/or Specimens to the ASPB Display and Website and get entered in a draw to win a prize!

The ASPB Communications Committee invites members to submit photos and specimens for use by the ASPB for the purposes of enhancing and updating our display, brochure and website.
Consent waivers will need to be completed upon submission and details will be provided to contributors.

Photo submissions: Please email photos in tiff format to pbiol@asbp.ab.ca with "ASPB photos for submission" in the Subject line. Photos should not exceed 3 MB. Photos may be submitted at any time; however, photos submitted prior to April 30 will be eligible for use in updating the ASPB display and brochure. After April 30, photos will be stored for future updates.

Specimen submissions: Please email pbiol@aspb.ab.ca with ASPB specimen submission in the subject line if you wish to supply specimens for the ASPB display. Arrangements will be clarified for the best method for ASPB to acquire the material.

The first 20 people to submit photos and/or specimens to the ASPB will be entered in a draw to receive a prize.

ASPB Nominating Committee Announcement

The following members have accepted nominations for upcoming Board positions:

President Elect (term 2011-2012): Susan Patey LeDrew
Director (term 2011-2013): Gerry Haekel
Director (term 2011-2013): Darrell Jobson

Canada Revenue Agency Updates for ASPB

Effective immediately GST will automatically be added when renewing all categories of membership, except regular members (i.e., P.Biols). GST will also be added to application fees. This is a requirement of the Canadian Revenue Agency.

In Memory of Dr James William Case

The ASPB is saddened to announce the recent passing of Dr James Case. Dr Case has been a member of the ASPB almost since the beginning and will be missed by all.

Dr James William Case died on Tuesday March 01 from terminal cancer.

The funeral was held in Calgary on Saturday March 05.

Dr James Case leaves behind his wife of 20 years , Lourdes, and his 18 year old son Thomas.

A Message from Your President

By Laurie Hamilton, P.Biol., ASPB President

It has been a very busy term as President; with the Board, committee members and volunteers working to create a long list of accomplishments. Details of these accomplishments are included in the Annual Report, which was recently mailed to the membership and is available through the Members>Downloads.

I am excited to have our annual conference, entitled "The Role of the Biologist in Industrial Development", mark the end of my term (see advertisement in this issue). The conference program reflects great contributions from members and other practitioners, and also offers two interesting sessions that will help to define the role of the biologist. One of these sessions is a Discussion Forum that brings together representatives from industry, consulting, government, academia and an environmental non-government organization. Each representative will discuss the role of a biologist in industrial development from their different perspective. The second of these sessions is a Discussion Forum for the development of guidelines for wetland impact assessments and best management practices. The conference will not only provide examples of roles that biologists have played in industrial development, but will also provide opportunities for conference delegates to participate in defining how biologists will participate in the future.

The ASPB Board of Directors has made it a priority to invite the other five professional organizations in the PRO-6 (i.e., APPEGGA, AIA, CAPFT, CAPF and ACPA) to ASPB's conference. This is intended to strengthen the role of the professional in Alberta. I had a recent conversation that hammered home the importance of strengthening the role of professionals in Alberta. During this conversation, the other person indicated that they felt the role of the biologist in industrial development was to 'rubber stamp' environmental assessments. This assertion did not surprise me, but I have my own perspective on the matter. My sense is that this statement was the general perception of the role of biologists in industrial development in Alberta, but not representative of the process involved with environmental assessment. What happens when a biologist makes a biological recommendation and a client asks if it is a regulatory requirement…and it is not? What recourse does a biologist have? These are only two of many questions that I have regarding the practice of biology in Alberta, as it is not only the biologist that has a role in environmental assessments in industrial development, but other professionals and non-professional practitioners as well.

I suggested that if there were a requirement for professional sign-off by regulators, then a lot of issues could be resolved. By having professional sign-off on environmental assessments, it would ensure due diligence and that a professional's Code of Ethics is followed. If a professional practitioner is found wanting of due diligence and negligent of their Code of Ethics, then they risk the loss of their professional designation and ultimately the right to practice in Alberta. Ideally, the goal is that only qualified practitioners will remain. Each professional organization has the obligation to:

- Ensure that their members meet education and experience minimums and practice under an ethics standard to qualify for the professional designation;
- Create practice standards and provide professional development opportunities to develop and improve their member's understanding of their practice; and
- Ensure a disciplinary system is in place if practice or ethical obligations are not met by members.

The process of developing a relationship with other professional organizations in Alberta enables the creation of a unified group, with the potential to develop provincial practice standards, as well as influence policy development (e.g., professional sign-off requirements).

How does ASPB meet its professional obligations? Since 1977, ASPB's infrastructure as a professional regulating organization has been developed in response to the needs of the public and the members. Currently:

- The ASPB Registration Committee is reviewing the internal registration process document to ensure due diligence when approving applicants;
- The Ethics Committee is working on the second phase of the ethics strategy to create a better understanding amongst members of ASPB's Code of Ethics;
- Professional development opportunities are being created, such as the upcoming conference and through the ongoing work of the Edmonton and Calgary Professional Development Committees;
- Practice standards are being updated and developed by the Practice Review Committee; and
- The Discipline Committee is finalizing documents to simplify and clarify the discipline process.

Through it all, the Communications Committee is making these developments and opportunities available through monthly e-bulletins, the BIOS newsletter, and regular updates on the website.

It has been my pleasure working with the volunteers to achieve a long list of accomplishments, as detailed in the Annual Report. I look forward to seeing what ASPB volunteers continue to accomplish and strongly encourage all members to become active members through volunteering opportunities, as this is the only way that ASPB can continue to develop their vision and become a leader in the practice of biology.

ASPB Thanks...

The ASPB would like to thank the following companies for providing in-kind support, and for hosting ASPB meetings and events:

- Alberta Environment
- Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
- Golder Associates Ltd.
- Husky Energy
- Matrix Solutions Inc.
- Stantec
- TERA Environmental Consultants

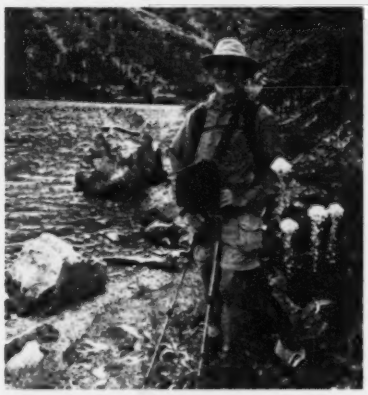
ASPB Discussion Forum

Check out our new posts at www.aspb.ab.ca

Interview with a Biologist: Dave Reid, P.Biol.

By Ngaio Hotte, P.Biol.

About the Biologist



Dave at Bertha Lake. Photo credit: Diane Reid

Dave Reid's work with plants has spanned nearly four decades, but you won't catch him boasting about his knowledge and experience. He is soft spoken and easy going; the kind of man whose voice might barely be noticed in a crowd. But when he does speak, it is rapidly apparent that Dave is a seasoned professional with a great deal to share.

Dave's colourful career began at the University of Saskatchewan, where he completed his Master's degree in Plant Ecology as part of a forest productivity study in the southeastern Yukon. He was soon offered a job with an engineering consulting firm in Calgary looking to expand into the environmental field. At a time when government jobs for biologists were few and far between, and industry positions almost unheard of, Dave gratefully accepted the opportunity. Indeed, the field of biology was regarded with a mixture of confusion and fear by industry.

"I worked with clients and engineers who regarded biologists as strange, sinister people." Dave chuckles. "They didn't know what effect [Biologists] would have on projects."

His first big project was in the Northwest Territories, working on the well-known Arctic Gas Project; which was recently resurrected as the Mackenzie Valley Gas Pipeline. "I had the opportunity to apply lots of vegetation skills that I had learned during university and to run the field program," Dave recalls. Since few procedures and protocols for biological surveys and assessments existed at the time, Dave and a number of colleagues from a variety of backgrounds were instrumental in developing standard procedures which continue to be adapted and used today. For four years, Dave travelled within the project area conducting vegetation inventories and interacting with engineers and local people.

He also had the chance to develop a kinship with his favourite species, the pitcher plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*). Dave had studied academic literature on the distribution of the pitcher plant during a graduate course, but was fascinated to observe the plant in wetlands around Fort Simpson. "The attraction is that it is very adaptable in its food supply by extracting nutrients from the soil as well as by trapping insects and spiders," he explains, but admits, "and I suppose, to some degree, by controlling the black fly and mosquito population." Indeed, it is easy to understand why Dave would soon learn to love any plant that decreased the number of black flies present during a field season.

In the 1970's, a handful of passionate practitioners created the organization that would become the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists. Athough Dave was not directly involved in the inception of the ASPB, he was intrigued by the goals of the group and soon became a member. The group's intent was to create a profile for the profession through symposia to create public awareness and establish legal recognition with a professional designation. A designation would allow standards of practice and professional development to be implemented and increase the credibility of practitioners. Dave strongly favoured this approach and dedicated what time he had as Treasurer and Secretary before going on to serve as President in 1986. Among his duties with the ASPB, Dave was an active member of the professional development committee and organized guest speakers and workshops covering several topics of interest.

Over the years, Dave's company changed hands a number of times, and eventually became part of AMEC, where he now manages a group of ten to twelve people as the head of the Vegetation group. His job has taken him throughout western and northern Canada and to other countries like Russia, Tanzania, Suriname, Pakistan, Peru, and Ecuador. The international experience introduced him to the unique challenges that accompany working in new places, cultures, and conditions as well as a much greater appreciation of the strength of environmental laws and regulations in Canada

Changes and Developments in the Field of Biology

During his career, Dave has noticed a trend toward a broadening focus of practitioners, but is quick to point out the benefits that specialists have to offer. "We need both generalists and nit-pickers," he says. "We need people that can wade into the details, using good science, with a high degree of credibility." He also feels that scrutiny of environmental reports and impact assessments will continue to increase, and cites the example of oil sands monitoring and reporting. "Biologists are going to be held very accountable for their observations, conclusions and recommendations," he cautions, noting the role of specialists in ensuring that procedures are followed and information is thoroughly documented.

Words of Wisdom

Dave also believes that biologists can play a key role in communicating with the public. "Biologists", he explains, "need to interpret complex biological characteristics to the public so that society can understand the issues more clearly. I think that we should continue with our annual symposium, as well as encourage members to submit articles to newspapers and social media. I think that in the national media there has been a lack of good information on biological restoration and monitoring programs especially in the oil sands area. However, it is not part of a professional biologist's job to become an environmental advocate; that is a matter of personal choice. There are other organizations to undertake this role. Biologists need to be as objective and scientific as possible, and present the facts of the case, as opposed to advocating a particular position." Dave acknowledges that there are challenges associated with maintaining a neutral position, but suggests that independent or retired biologists would be good candidates to undertake this task.

Within the ASPB reside a number of talented, seasoned practitioners like Dave. At this year's Annual ASPB Conference, take a look around and remember that some of the quietest characters have the most interesting stories to tell.

Grassland Vegetation Inventory (GVI) and Primary Land Vegetation Inventory (PLVI) Information Session

By Tracey Etwell, P.Biol.

On Saturday February 25, 2011, ASPB hosted a presentation from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) staff members on the topic of Grassland Vegetation Inventory (GVI) and the Primary Land Vegetation Inventory (PLVI).

Barry Adams, Oriano Castelli, and Livio Fent presented on the development, and current status of the GVI system. The GVI system was developed out of a need for more detailed geographic land-based information to inform prairie conservation efforts and regional planning. The GVI system was developed based on characterization of landscape features and soil types from air photo interpretation. Contractors have been busily delineating and attributing the landscape throughout southern Alberta for over 5 years now. The assessment of two-thirds of the grasslands region has been completed. Examples of how the landscape was classified were presented through images. As well, the presentation included a discussion of how the classes were developed, and also the decisions made to classify wetlands, and miscellaneous features such as shelterbelts and single trees. This presentation, full of great images of different landscape classifications, is available on the ASPB website (www.aspb.ab.ca) in the members download area (requires login).

When the project was first developed, a goal was set at the 5 year mark to review and update the existing classifications. Since they are now at the 5 year mark, this update will occur alongside the new classification of the remaining land. It was explained that the data collected thus far are available for the public's use either through a data request sent to ASRD's Resource Information Unit in Red Deer for a specific GIS dataset or in the form of an online interactive viewer (see below) called the Internet Mapping Framework (IMF). Obviously the GIS files are more conducive to analysis that might be required for some projects, but would require GIS resources by the user.

Mike Willoughby presented on the Primary Land Vegetation Inventory (PLVI). This land inventory covers other areas of the province (green and white zone) where no inventory currently exists. The GVI project led the team to the conclusion that a system was required for non-prairie areas as well. The PLVI approach works better in the parkland and forested areas as these areas tend to have more treed vegetation and different wetland types than the prairie areas covered by the GVI. The PLVI was designed in a similar manner with classes and a hierarchical structure. Lands that fall under the PLVI are being classified in an ongoing manner. However, land that has been classified to date has been made available online from the IMF system (see below).

The final presentation was an introduction on the IMF. This site can be found at https://securexnet.env.gov.ab.ca/imfpub/imf.jsp?site=vegetation_inventory

username: prairie

password: roughfescue

This framework allows one to look at a specific piece of land and view any publicly available geographic information the province may have, which may include the GVI or PLVI information. The user's guide to the IMF is available from the ASPB website in the members download area (requires login). The IMF promises to be a very useful tool for professionals seeking geographic information for projects they are working on.

Barry Adams informed us that they now have a report available upon request that discusses their risk assessment of reclamation success for grassland areas. Please contact Barry Adams for this document (Barry.Adams@gov.ab.ca)

We thank all the ASRD staff for coming to Calgary and presenting to our group.

Photo credit: Kristen Foreman, P.Biol.

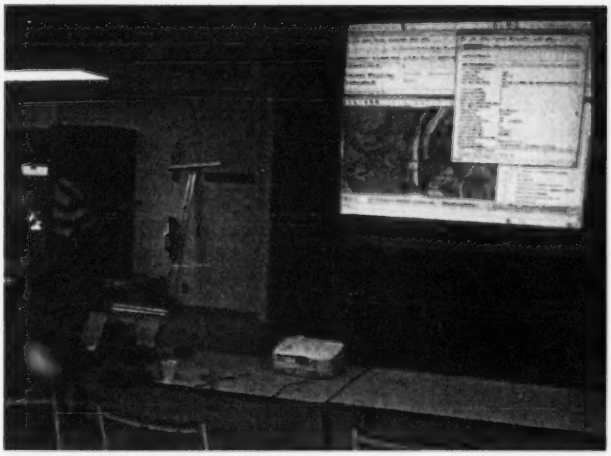


Photo credit: Kristen Foreman, P.Biol.

CPAWS: A Simple Solution

By Sarah Elmeligi, P.Biol.

The Southern Alberta Chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) teamed up with a series of volunteers and Namaste productions to produce: A Simple Solution. This short video was created to explain the importance of parks and protected areas in addressing many of the complex issues we face, particularly climate change and grizzly bear recovery. Much of the scientific literature suggests that increasing the extent of our protected areas and connectivity between them are priorities for mitigating the impacts of climate change. The literature also shows that to effectively recover our grizzly bear population, we need to increase connectivity and grizzly bear habitat security. This could be accomplished by increasing the extent of our protected areas.

Through various literature reviews last year, it became apparent to CPAWS' Senior Conservation Planner, that increasing parks and protected areas was a simple solution to many complex problems. While this has been recognized and accepted in the scientific community as necessary for a multitude of reasons, the average person in the public may not be aware of what exactly parks do for us. This video was created for them.

The video itself is about 20 minutes long and is in two parts on YouTube. The video features local wilderness experts Ben Gadd and Barry Blanchard. CPAWS Southern Alberta has hosted three video releases in Canmore, Bragg Creek, and Calgary to show the video and engage the community in a discussion with local experts about the role parks and protected areas play in our lives. Please take the time to watch this video and discuss it with your friends, family, and peers. Then pass it on to everyone you know! If you have any questions, comments, or ideas of other venues to show the video, please email Sarah Elmeligi, Sr Conservation Planner, at selmeligi@cpaws.org.

Links to A Simple Solution:
Part 1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORq_1s6reCs
Part 2: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adnyJ-uqlTw&feature=related

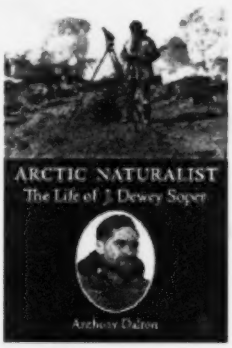
Visit the CPAWS website: www.cpaws-southernalberta.org for more information.

Dr J.D. Soper Award

The Dr J.D. Soper Award is ASPB's most prestigious award. The award recognizes those who have made outstanding contributions in the field of biology. The recipient must be an Alberta biologist, be nominated by an ASPB member, with letters of support from at least three ASPB members, and receive unanimous consent of the ASPB Board of Directors. The award involves an honorary life membership in the ASPB and a display award. Recently, a biography of Dr Soper was written and was reviewed in the following article.

Arctic Naturalist, The Life of J. Dewey Soper by Anthony Dalton

A Book Review by Angela Perry, P.Biol.



J. Dewey Soper was born 5 May 1893, in Guelph, Onatrio, and died 2 November 1982, in Edmonton, Alberta. He was one of the last of the great Canadian pioneering naturalists. "He was a surveyor, a cartographer, an ornithologist, a botanist, and a mammalogist, as well as an explorer." (pg. 187). Arctic Naturalist, The Life of J. Dewey Soper traces the path of Soper from boyhood through his entire life, showcasing the events that led to his life as a biologist. The story also explores the challenges that many of us face trying to balance work, passion and family.

Author Anthony Dalton paints a picture of a young man growing up inspired by the adventures of explorers, such as Ernest Shackleton trying to reach the south pole and Dr Frederick Cook racing for the North pole: "And the more I read [of the Arctic], the stronger was my desire to get to the land of the Eskimo where many renowned explorers had made their mark…The longing kept right on unabated" (pg. 31).

In order to pursue his passion Dewey made many sacrifices as a young man to help his family and gain money to fund his next exploration. His work history included trapping, taxidermy, construction and even selling pianos. His every spare moment was spent in the outdoors observing and investigating. He came to realize that to gain recognition in the field he had to complete his Biology degree and to that end, he completed his studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

Degree in hand, Dewey Soper could continue to follow his childhood heroes and he eventually was posted in Baffin Island on three different assignments for several years. As one of the first biologists to explore many regions of the Arctic, he contributed significantly with many new specimens, drawings and knowledge such as the breeding grounds of the blue goose. As a naturalist, he was a major contributor of knowledge and added significantly to the floral and faunal specimen collections of the National Museum of Canada and to the University of Alberta, as well as to other museums across the country. He also regularly improved and expanded maps of the Arctic.

Dewey Soper also participated in fieldwork across the prairies and in Wood Buffalo National Park. His detailed notes contributed to several bodies of works including The Mammals of Alberta, a textbook that was required reading for many of us in University.

Overall Dalton does an excellent job of piecing together the life of Dewey Soper from his journals, archives and personal accounts as well as from interviews with his relatives and the people he worked with. Details such as the food required for different expeditions and the extreme temperatures as low as -42 Fahrenheit endured, made this a very enjoyable read.

ASPB Hosts The Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery and the Bow Habitat Station Tour

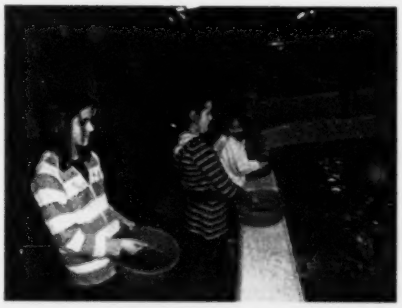
By Stacey Schaub-Szabo, P.Biol. **Photo credits all Stacey Schaub-Szabo, P.Biol.**

The renovations are complete and the Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery and the Bow Habitat Station are open to the public! The Alberta Society of Professional Biologists (ASPB) Calgary Professional Development Committee organized a tour on January 20, 2011. This venue is a must see for families, budding biologists and out-of-town visitors. During the ASPB tour, kids and adults had the chance to get splashed while feeding the fish, and get really up close and personal with these fishy characters. We saw all stages: eggs, fry, and fingerlings. The more adventurous kids learned how to look for dead eggs and siphon them using a rubber tube. For avid fishermen reading this, you will be happy to know that the Hatchery is rearing larger fish to stock Alberta lakes! If you go to the Sustainable Resource Development site and search Fish Stocking, you can get more details on which lakes are being stocked.

Thanks to Ryan Lyster for answering our many detailed questions about the Hatchery and to Catherine Jorstead who entertained the young children with hands-on biology.

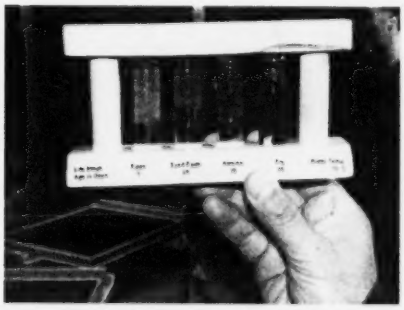
Elyse Nielsen touching the fingerlings

Thanks to our guides Ryan Lyster and Catherine Jorstead



Our hands stunk from the fish food, but the resulting feeding frenzy made it worthwhile! Enya & Kwyn Bresee and Elyse Nielsen

Evangeline Thompson and Elyse Nielsen checking out the hatching stages



Picture of the different hatching stages

Alberta Society of Professional Biologists

ASPB INTRODUCTORY PLANT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

PRESENTED BY: **Amy Griffiths, P.Biol., Kristen Foreman, P.Biol., and Kristen Beechey, P.Biol.**

Saturday, May 28, 2011, 9 am to 5 pm

Location: Cochrane (Details supplied to Paid Registrants)

Workshop coordinator can be reached for inquiries at kforeman@teraenv.com

Class Size Limited to 25 registrants

This one-day workshop consists of a practical and theoretical introduction to vascular plant identification. Focus is on learning morphology and terminology, and using taxonomic keys and field guides to learn species of a few main plant families in Alberta. This course is designed for people with little or no plant identification experience, and for those who want to refresh their taxonomy and terminology.

Registration includes lunch, refreshments, and manuals. Sign up early as previous workshops have filled very quickly.

Registration is available on-line at www.aspb.ab.ca

REGISTRATION & PAYMENT DEADLINE ~ May 19, 2011

Registration Fees

ASPB Member	**$70.00**
Non-member	**$85.00**

ASPB Welcomes Its Newest Members

Professional Biologist P. Biol.

Natasha Adam
Alan Arsenault
John Baak
Brady Balicki
Scott Ballantyne
Shirley Bartz
Stephen Bettles
Nicole Brugman
Sandy Campbell
Jillian Carey
Nathan de Bruyn
Andrea English
Nathan Erik
Darren Filipic
Jennette Fox
Brendan Ganton
Kiley Gibson
Isabelle Girard
Garth Graham
Sheelah Griffith
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Trevor Hindmarch
Peter Jalkotzy
Trina James
Lyndsey Johnson
Jonah Keim
Jennifer Kerr
James Kiryakos
Craig Knaus
Randall Krichbaum
Denis Lacroix
Timothy Lee
Lisa Levez
Cindy Lipp
Byron Littleton
Martine Long
Ross Mabee
Ian Macdonald
Charles Macmichael
Shannon Miller
Ross Murray
Craig Mushens
Fortune Ogbebo
Erika Paradis
Brady Pollock
Kim Poupard
Charles Priestley
Sunil Rajput
Corey Rasmussen
John Rithaler
Rachelle Robitaille
Ben Rudnik
Bryan Shepard
Carly Silver
Geoff Smart
Jordan Smith
James Smith
Patti Swan
Conrad Thiessen
Michael Vander Meulen
Nan Wang
Angele Watrin-Prodaehl
Corey White
Peter Whitehead
Nathalie Whitehouse
Gordon Wichert
Thomas Willms
Kimberley Wolgemuth

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Lacey AuCoin
Sarah Begin
Diana Boxma
Sinead Boyle
Chantel Bromley
Lindsay Cote
Andrea Dechene
Bailey Deopker
Camilo Florez
Barbra Fortin
Kristell Gagnon
Tyler Gingras
Terina Hancock
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Jamie Sullivan
Derek Tanner
Andrea Teruel Diaz
Keith Whelpdale
Krystle White
Mayura Wijekoon
David Wilkie
Adam Wilson
Alissa Wilson
Shane Wood

LINKS and ARTICLES Worth Sharing

Subject: Article - Kids' bee study published in science journal
See the news story here (http://www.cbc.ca/technology/story/2010/12/22/bee-blackawton-science-journal.html) and check the links to the actual published paper and commentary.

Membership Statistics

Membership Type	Current Members
P. Biol	739
BIT	178
Student	7
Associated	18
Public	1
Honorary	6
Temporary Withdrawn	28
Total Members	977

This number has already grown since publication!

Articles Wanted

So now you're part of the ASPB. Why not submit an article? Tell us why you joined. Who influenced you? How did you hear about the Society? We are always looking for articles to put in the BIOS Newsletter. If you have a story or an issue you would like to share with your fellow professionals, please submit it to lindazim@shaw.ca.
You could win a prize!